

Harbinger of Light.

A
MONTHLY JOURNAL.

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE; FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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THE recent action of the New South Wales premier in forbidding Mr. Proctor's lecture has revived the Sunday question, which for a time has been quiescent, and the clerics, who are reputed to have prompted Sir Henry Parkes' action, will be astonished at the unanimity with which the press of their own and this city have condemned it. Public feeling is aroused, and is not likely to subside again until some more liberal interpretation of the law in respect to Sabbath observance is conceded. It is evident that the storm aroused has had a salutary effect upon Sir Henry, as although his action has been criticised and condemned in no unmeasured terms by both Mr. Bright and Mr. Tyerman, the law has not been put into force in their case, and their Sunday meetings are held as usual.

It will be remembered by our readers that about eighteen months since, Sir Bryan O'Loughlen, when Attorney-General, took a similar step to that adopted by Sir Henry Parkes, in relation to Mr. Walker's Opera House lectures, the managers of the theatre being informed late on Saturday that if they permitted another lecture on Sunday evening their license would be suspended. A deputation of those interested in the continuance of the lectures waited upon Sir Bryan, who displayed his legal astuteness by basing his objection on the money question, saying, "give me a guarantee that no money shall be taken at the doors, and you shall be permitted to continue." The ruse succeeded, the committee not wishing to disappoint the numbers who were expected to the lecture, and feeling that the apparent concession would modify public indignation and prevent the likelihood of successful resistance, accepted the terms and finished the course of lectures under them. Since that time all Sunday lecturers who have spoken in Melbourne have had to depend upon voluntary contributions, and although (judging from

Mr. Washington Rivers' statement) Spiritualists and Freethinkers seem to act more liberally in this than the Orthodox people, the returns are quite inadequate to pay the heavy expenses of a theatre or large public hall. The objection to a charge being made for admission to Sunday lectures is a sham. Do not all orthodox churches let their seats? but having a certain tenure of their buildings they take payment quarterly or annually in advance—a system which the Spiritualist and Freethinking bodies would be happy to adopt had they suitable buildings of their own, but having to rent from week to week they are necessitated to take their seat-rents in the same way. The revenue of the churches, derived from endowments, seat-rents, &c., enables them to import ecclesiastical talent, and were the Spiritualists and Freethinkers placed on the same footing they could offer similar inducements to such men as William Denton or Robert Ingersoll, and it is doubtless the fear of such competition that stimulates the clerical party to exercise their influence on the Executive of the day to impede the action of the Progressionists in this direction. The question of opening the Public Library and Museum is to be again brought before Parliament in a few days, and in view of the prospect of its being affirmed, some practical steps should be taken to remove this obstruction to the maintenance of a popular religious platform. According to the teachings of the churches, one of their principal objects is to save sinners, but we do not see why they should monopolise all the business, especially when it is known that thousands decline to submit themselves to the process who would not object to a more rational method of cure. We (the Progressionists) want to help in the good work, and can confidently recommend *our* process as an improvement on the old system, the end being attained without the use of either blood or brimstone. Our "salvation army" only wants fair play, and with the sword of reason it will cut down the errors which obstruct the path of progress, opening the road to truth, which is the real saviour of the world.

WE have information from Mr. G. M. Stephen of his intention to visit Melbourne next week, to heal the sick by Spirit Magnetism. His advent will be duly advertised in the daily papers.

WISE WORDS FROM SWEDENBORG.

(Continued.)

The terms *ill* and *well* are but relative terms of an imperfect or growing state, and lead on to other conditions in which man shall eventually find himself, and be none the worse for the so-called trials through which he has passed.

There are certain mental operations which involve serious consideration—Man's power to acquire knowledge, and the results which ensue in his experience. What then is *knowledge*? Knowledge is at the very base of experience, and consists of the changed aspect which certain things around man assume as he becomes better acquainted with them. This acquirement of knowledge is of the very greatest importance, that man may obtain the command of the circumstances and things by which he is surrounded. More than half his troubles arise from this want of knowledge; it is a dangerous thing to handle things without knowing their use; and so, also, to come in contact with persons unless you are alive to their character and disposition. On the same grounds, even to exercise one's own powers without knowing the use and intention thereof, is a most dangerous thing, and often results in much that is disagreeable and injurious. Man's first business is to acquire knowledge of things which stand connected with him, and of necessity influence him. Knowledge of all description is good to the man who knows how to control himself; the greater his knowledge, the greater his wisdom, if he knows how to use his knowledge with effect. Knowledge then becomes power, a power which every one may well desire to possess. But the acquirement of this knowledge is an endless feature of man's conscious existence, and can only be gained in proportion to his ability either to be taught or to investigate for himself. The royal road to secure this end is to know how to regulate the conditions, both of a receptive and acquisitive nature, and to appropriate the acquirements in a judicious manner, so that they become part of the man's own nature, his means of progress and growth to higher stages of existence.

But knowledge gives rise to another feature of experience—*Imagination*: for just in proportion as man comes to know, does he imagine, in anticipation of further knowledge what this or that may be to which his acquired knowledge seems to lead him. By this means he is led beyond all knowledge of a palpable character, for he is justified in assuming many things as the result of palpable knowledge; but the imaginative faculties urge him on into regions beyond, and surround him with fears of the most tormenting character. To meet this difficulty the term *faith* has been coined, which implies a trust in future developments of a character favourable to man under certain conditions. As, for instance, when regarded in relation to the earth-life state, man is urged to exercise faith in an intention on the part of the Governor of the Universe to make all things work together for good to those who obey certain laws and live up to certain principles. And so of the future existence, that then all will be well with the individual if he follows a certain theological lead, and conforms his life thereto. But it will be seen that this ground of faith must be a matter of uncertainty after all, because it is based on imagination and not palpable knowledge, and in most instances not even on what we would term *impalpable* knowledge. It is quite true a man may have confidence in a certain course of life to which he is led by knowledge and the wise application thereof, but when we speak of imagination and faith here, we refer more particularly to that which is not, and cannot be realised at the moment; consequently, it becomes man to attach a very great importance to the acquirement of knowledge, and always to use his imagination, and exercise faith with great caution, for knowledge is the basis on which all that is valuable in his experience rests—his present possession, and the ladder up which he must climb to higher attainments.

Now, if this be the great consideration with man, he will then give that due attention to the *uses of life*,

which will render him a valuable and important member of whatever society he may be placed in. Next to the knowledge of what *he is*, man should desire to know what he can do best in his individual and relative spheres.

The *end of life* is only to be accomplished in this ministry of the faculties in relation to the mutual contact of the various parts of material existence, when that ministry is conducted with the intention to secure the most perfect results; and since every movement of man, and even his thoughts, must be constantly engaged in this direction, it is thus man's life is made up of *uses* or acts to accomplish wise and profitable ends. Thus, his intercourse with his fellow man, and thus all his intentions in relation to the whole of his movements. A proper consideration of this course will do more to restrain man from wild and foolish conduct than anything else; and although at times he may think it slow work thus patiently and ploddingly to acquire experience, it will be seen in the end that every movement was a step in the right direction. To live wisely is to live usefully, with due regard to the prudent combination of all those circumstances which are known to result in mutual well-being.

There are higher uses than those which relate exclusively to the passing circumstances of earth-life; important as those may be, we ascend a step higher when we train the mind to operate on the spiritual plane of our being. And this is an aspect of the uses of life which is too much lost sight of, and far too much neglected even by those who profess to be the children of the light. It was never intended that the whole of an individual's attention should be devoted to the passing duties of the mere material existence; he is qualified to realise other claims, and discharge other duties, which anticipate as it were the processes of the future stages of his existence. Therefore, when contemplating the uses of life, let it be distinctly understood that there is a spiritual plane of action as well as a material, and spiritual duties as well as the mere external obligations which rest upon you.

I shall now proceed to explain what is understood by the *object of life*. While it is a fact that everything sentient is under obligation to use the present moment in a manner consistent with its capacity for action, it is also imperative that the sum total of all actions should have a reference to the working out of some end, and this end, particularly as it regards man, is the object of life. In seeking for this end it will be necessary to look beneath the surface, inasmuch as the circumstances of the mere material existence are but the aids to that object. Everything connected with the earth-life is evanescent; nothing there is permanent, and the perfection thereof consists in its inevitable decay; therefore the object of life cannot be understood, excepting by the children of light, those who recognise the durability of spiritual essences, and the permanence of man, the spirit. It is customary in a well-ordered educational establishment to make all the training and culture to have a bearing on the future efficiency of the pupil to fulfil the duties of a citizen of the world. And, in like manner, the education of earth-life, with all its experiences, is intended to prepare the individual for the higher duties of the next stage of existence. And all those qualities of mind, and features of character, which may be developed, and which have a reference to the orderly growth and well-being of the entire community, are to have that attention which will secure the end in view.

We next consider the *Destiny* itself, which is herein involved. The character of that destiny cannot be a thing of chance. He who rules all things has appointed a lot, and that a definite one, to everything which is capable of intelligently regarding it, or sensitively appreciating it. Man's destiny is one of growth, enlargement and use, calculated to impart to himself a conscious pleasure in the full exercise of recognised ability. Hence, just in proportion as man comes into harmonious relation with the operation of the laws of the universe, so will he realise his destiny, which is as progressive as it is unending. That destiny, then, is to share with the

Infinite Author of his existence, those delights of existence which stand connected with the progressive perfection of man's nature. Hence, man's destiny may be realised every step he takes in his progressive growth, inasmuch as it is the result of present acquirements; and the misery, as it is termed, of existence, which seems to befall all in their turn, is also as much an element of that destiny as is the pleasure, because it is part of the result of growth under imperfect conditions. Instruments must of necessity sustain a relative imperfection ere they are properly understood, and the adaptation of part to part is recognised; but the progress from stage to stage is inevitable, and there can be no fixity of position so far as any stage is concerned: and the law of progress involves the inevitable growth into a more harmonious and satisfactory condition of being. Consequently, the destiny of man, as to its actual results, in the case of the entire race, must be one both in harmony with the Infinite goodness of the Source of all being, and the happiness and satisfaction of man himself; but the attainment of this, like the perfection of more subordinate elements of the universe, involves reaches of time which must of necessity vary in almost every instance. Let it suffice to say, man's destiny is to be momentarily realised in all his actions while he thus passes on, as the result of faithful attention to the laws of his being, both individually and relatively considered.

In a note, I would here give my reasons for not dealing with such definitions, or terms, as *heaven and hell, election, salvation, repentance, faith, righteousness, &c.*, &c.; because, as terms, they refer only to such phases of experience as are artificial, rather than of a real character. A vast number of words and phrases are coined by theologians and others, which have the effect of confusing rather than directing mankind.

I desire to confine my remarks to such terms as accurately define the facts of the universe, and will, consequently, aid mankind in their endeavours to rise upwards in the scale of life. There is no phrase more dwelt upon in relation to man's experience as a religious being than God-manifest. From this conception has arisen all those attempts to personate and localise the Infinite Being which the religions of the world reveal. As also my own *Divinum Humanum*, in which I endeavoured to make it apparent that, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, mankind could realise God, and come in contact with Him, or indeed, in other words, that He was really and truly God. It is characteristic of the human race in its elementary state, to feel the need of some such conception of a present and personal Deity; but when the mind becomes more enlarged, then it will be enabled to recognise the fulness of the Deity as manifested in all things which be, including the growth of Deific principles in themselves. I do not mean to affirm that it is impossible for one individual to manifest Deific principles in a greater degree than others, but that the sum total of Deity could be comprised in one personal human, is to my comprehension utterly incompatible with the recognised order of things in the wide universe. It is alone through the out-birth of spiritual essences that the great ruling Principle of the Universe can be manifested to the observation of creatures whose mode of recognition approaches them from without. Under any circumstances, such as we can possibly realise, a very small grasp of the mode by which Deity is manifested in the universe generally, is possible, seeing that our scope for research is limited, and that it is impossible for the finite to grasp the infinite; for there are no conceivable bounds to a domain which is supposed to partake of the characteristics of its primal elements. Nature, as it comprises man's surroundings and his own personal being, affords the base on which should be built the manifested Deity. There and there alone will the inscrutable Principle of life be realised, moulding elements into a form compatible with the Infinite Will and Pleasure which we imagine characterises that awful Principle of independent Being.

Marnias Meti.

H. J. B.

Melbourne, August, 1880.

FROM "THE LAW-EXPOUNDER OF THE UNIVERSE."

SECTION III.

DEAR Friends, and fellow seekers after truth, fellow labourers in the fields of knowledge, we will on the present occasion continue the cosmogenic theory, or nebular hypothesis as it is still denominated by terrestrial astronomers, but verified by spiritual observation and spiritual science the theory can no longer be considered hypothesis it having passed from hypothesis into fully ascertained and indisputable fact. But the laws of cosmical progress and the agglomeration of the ethereal atoms into suns and planets, cannot be fully understood until the mind passes from mortality to immortality. It requires spiritual development and spiritual science to unravel the phenomena of creation and fully understand the laws—both simple and sublime—which Infinite wisdom has impressed upon matter, and to discern the stamp of divine perfection in the wonderful laws and the unalterable harmony of the order of the universe.

In my last address which I was compelled to terminate somewhat abruptly, I referred to the fact of the ethereal atoms forming a body of successive layers of unequal density around the central nucleus of the forming star, the densest matter gravitating to the centre, and the lightest, or the most volatile, reaching the surface, then mutual repulsion intervening, compelling the great action of the centrifugal force repulsing energy, to overcome the gravitating power of centripetal, compelling three great actions—condensation, evaporation and precipitation, (nature's processes are miracles more stupendous than the human mind can grasp.)

When the nucleus is sufficiently formed to be wholly influenced by the central repulsion and *not* until then are successive reacting zones of volatile molecules thrown off, which form the planets of the solar system. These zones commencing their cosmic progress by forming concentric rings uniting into spheres, and the great resistance of the ether compelling them to develop a resisting medium in cosmic space. Reciprocal attraction must, in all parts of the nucleus which is being condensed by the coolness of the ether, leave in the plane of the equator zones of vaporish molecules, which require a greater or less degree of cold to return to a liquid or solid state. These in after ages form the satellites and rings; the orbital motion of the satellites and rings being the same as the rotatory motion of the planets, the motion of the planets being coincident with the rotatory motion of the sun. This agreement of the orbital motion of the sun, planets, satellites and rings, shows the unity and sympathy which unites the whole of the solar system. The Creator having forged a chain of harmony uniting together the whole system, and placing the last link in its progenitor the sun, that he may conduct them towards some great goal, or great centre of attraction. Thus the law of gravity becomes the primordial law of all the heavenly bodies, linking them in one vast bond of unity, the necessary consequence being an equilibrium of the originally fluid suns and planets. A relationship exists between the radius vector and the surface of the nucleus in the different stages of condensation through which it has passed, and thus stratum after stratum of the condensation will press against the bodies' surface with a force diminishing with the square of the bodies' surface, and in the forming planets may be seen matter (if I said ethereal atoms I should explain myself better), subject to great conflicting forces; those which centralise, and their opposites, which manifest their existence in disturbing and dispersing influences, the sympathy with the radius vector arising from the first condensation of the forming planet; and thus the radius vector sweeps over equal spaces in equal times. Thus, according to dynamical principles, the nucleus must have formed in the nebulosity of the sun ere those zones of matter were flung off which form the planets of the solar system. Thus the cosmogenic theory is not alone applicable to the solar system, but extends to the formation of the innumerable suns and worlds throughout the universe, and reveals the origin of all the heavenly

bodies, while science discloses the method of creation; and what are the heavenly bodies but divergent branches of the mighty tree of creation, a constant succession of phenomena—ever-progressing changes into higher and higher forms of life. The creative power is ever at work. God the Creator is continually creating new universes. In the depths beyond the deeps lie universes untold; and what is all creation but the visible evidence of the power and glory of the Creator? Oh! seekers after spiritual knowledge, pray that your understandings may be enlightened to behold the infinite wisdom and illimitable love which is everywhere manifest in the works of God.

Terrestrial astronomical science admits that the sun is very much larger than the solar planets with regard to magnitude, but assigns it a mass or weight four times less than the weight assigned to your earth. This theory which is deduced partly from observation and partly from calculations from experiments with the pendulum, is altogether erroneous; the error partly arising from the position of the observer and partly from atmospheric or other media through which the observations are made; while it is also explicable, in some degree, by errors arising from the terrestrial influence on the pendulum. Since I have entered spirit-life I have had much to unlearn, and I have learned much; I have learned to know now, and to regard the sun as being as weighty as any of the cosmical bodies of the solar system. It were in vain to explain to you the experiments and observations which have enabled me to arrive at this result, suffice it to say that it is so. To assign the sun a density only equal to that given to it by terrestrial astronomers, would be to consider it a mass of glowing hydrogen—this being bulk without weight.

The sun, with regard to its physical constitution, is a solid non-luminous body with nine different coatings, or atmospheres, each one more luminous by comparison as it is further from the opaque body of the sun.

I will now enumerate for you these different atmospheres. I have said each is more luminous, but there is an exception. First.—An atmosphere which corresponds very much with the atmosphere of the earth when the earth's atmosphere is occupied by dense strata of dark and light clouds. This atmosphere is superimposed upon the dark body of the sun, and surrounds it to a great height. Next comes an elastic medium, extremely rarified, which separates the first from the third. The latter is a vaporous atmosphere; it is analogous to, but not exactly the same as, the vaporous atmosphere above the first stratum of the earth's atmosphere. Fourthly.—A condensing atmosphere; that is, a composition of dark or cloudy elements. This is the solitary exception. It is not so luminous as the preceding ones, removed from the dark body of the surface of the sun. Then we have what we term the refrigerating or intensely cool atmosphere, which intervening between the next, which is an extremely luminous one, to which terrestrial astronomy has assigned the name of photosphere, the condensation of the vaporous atmosphere intervening between the body of the sun, renders the sun cool and enjoyable. Then we have the photosphere, an intensely luminous atmosphere, and in this revolve immense rings and belts of cosmical bodies, which becoming heated by their revolutions around the photosphere, give it that luminous appearance it presents and are the foundation of the phenomena of facule and luculi. Then we have next a reflecting atmosphere, which catching these extreme rays sends them forth towards the earth in an intenser state; i. e., surcharged with magnetism. We have next an extremely transparent atmosphere, which, so far as spiritual science supplies us with knowledge, acts as a medium between that and the external surface of the sun, which is extremely gaseous. Indeed we may consider that what is called the transparent atmosphere to be an extremely subtle fluid, constituting a higher, more sublimated and refined medium than the second, removed from the dark body of the sun. It is an elastic medium, between the other atmosphere and the external atmosphere of the sun, which is the last. These have all movements independent of each other, the photosphere giving the

sun that appearance of extreme incandescence which it presents when viewed with telescopic assistance.

The sun has also a rotatory motion upon its axis. This terrestrial science has become cognisant of by observation of those immense black spots on the solar surface which, appearing on the eastern border pass across the sun's disk and become less as they move across to the western border.

We will presently consider what it is that produces dynamical phenomena on a scale so vast as the various spots which the sun presents. I will first remark with regard to the rotatory motion of the sun, that like the orbital motion of the planets, it does not vary, but always occurs in the same interval of time, namely: twenty-five days, nine hours, forty-seven minutes, and five seconds. You will see, my friends, that spiritual science differs from terrestrial astronomy by two hours, sixty-three seconds in the rotatory motion of the sun. That may seem a small matter to you, but to the man of science it means a great deal indeed. I do not by that assign to the sun a less velocity of rotatory motion than terrestrial astronomy does, but I attribute to it a much greater bulk than they do. We will, in concluding the present address, just ascertain what it is that gives rise to the phenomena of the solar spots. I have already spoken of those meteoric rings which revolve in the photosphere, as producing those bright spots known to science as facule and luculi. Now it is well known that these usually precede the appearance of a spot—that a spot is seen sometimes without a nucleus, and penumbra, and sometimes with a nucleus and penumbra. These phenomena have given rise to much diversity of opinion amongst terrestrial astronomers; some considering them as transparent bodies, floating in the sun's surface, which bodies coming into conjunction towards the centre, produce the appearance of these spots. This is not so, because they would then have unequal appearances, and extremely unequal velocities, whereas they have varied appearances, but their velocity usually the same. The various spots would not have an equal velocity, for one spot would have a greater velocity than another. Another theory assumes that they are volcanic eruptions, and that the smoke constitutes the dark spots. Another, that they are the craters of extinct volcanoes, situated on high eminences, and being seen through the luminous surface of the sun present the appearance of nuclei and penumbra.

It is a fact that facule usually precede the appearance of spots. On the gaseous atmosphere of the sun are strong electro-magnetic currents; and as the rays are obliquely towards the borders of the sun, the current commences there, and gaining force as it traverses the sun's disk, where it comes into contact with the various atmospheres, this electric current sweeping down, discovers the dark body of the sun. When it has a nucleus, or when there is a seeming nucleus and no penumbra, the dark body is wholly disclosed to view. When this is the case—say penumbra without nuclei—the electro-magnetic current has only reached the condensing atmosphere of the sun below the other strata that lead to the surface. It is then a penumbra without a nucleus. Sometimes this seems to be the case when the interior of the cloudy spot is brighter than the shadow. This is easily explained. Sometimes an electro-magnetic current, cleaving aside the whole of the solar atmospheres, leaves exposed to view the solar sea, when the surface catching the reflected light of the photosphere renders the interior of the dark or cloudy spot of great brightness, but still dim and shadowy when compared with the extreme splendour of the sun's photosphere.

In reference to the solar spots. I take it for granted that you all know that the discovery of the rotation of the sun on its axis is due to the observation of the solar spots. Astronomers have disputed concerning their augmentation and diminution. If a spot appears in the eastern edge of the sun's disc it will seem like a small oval, being seen obliquely. As it nears the centre, it will appear like a circle enlarged in size; as it nears the western border it will present a foreshortened appearance, and will do so during 56 or 57 revolutions. They are confined to two zones, one 85 north declination, the

other 35 south declination. By us they are often seen as low as 46 south. These are divided from the equator by two zones, which are quite free from these magnetic excavations. Sometimes the sun will be thickly covered with, and at others quite free from them. Sometimes a vast spot, millions of miles in area, will be visible for two or three revolutions. Again, immense spots will break up into innumerable smaller ones, and will disappear near the centre of the solar disc. Others are traversed by rills of luminous matter: these are incandescent particles fused in gaseous media. With regard to faculae—the solar atmospheres at the surface are full of tremendous disturbances, which cause immense fissures, producing spots and penumbrae. In the equatorial regions of your earth are similar disturbances, which, viewed from a distance, would lead to a belief that it was uninhabited. The belts of Jupiter are attributable to the same cause. There is also a correlation between solar spots and terrestrial magnetism. With respect to the corona of the sun, I will speak of that hereafter. I will merely add that sun spots were intended for several purposes by the Creator, who foresees all wants; while the sun itself is the great magnetiser as well as the light-giver and heat-developer, the comets receive magnetism from the sun by the agency of these "spots," and distribute it through the solar system.

May the Infinite Wisdom guide you in your lives. May the Creator, Our Father, send his harmony into your lives, that by their purity and nobleness you may show to the world the greatness of Spiritual knowledge and Spiritual truth. Farewell!

Ca Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.
(Several communications held over for want of space.)

SPIRITISM IN SYDNEY—ITS PROGRESS.

PART 3.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

Dear Sir,—A short time after what I related in my last, I called on the owner of the house—who used to live there with his family, but had left it for the same reason as given by others. I found him a pleasant and jovial man, a ready wit; but a staunch bigoted Roman Catholic. Explaining to him the cause of my visit, he said he was well aware of the "strange noises," but believed they proceeded from the expansion and contraction of the eaves and floor, or the wind playing in the iron roof, (here was the origin of the wind story) and although unpleasant "they were nothing." But thinking it might be *something*, I named the matter to a clairvoyant friend. We determined to form an Investigating committee, and in a few days we started to call on the owner to get his sanction to hold a seance in the house, but before doing so we thought it best to visit the house, on approaching which the clairvoyant suddenly exclaimed "There he is, see, there he goes round the house?" As we could see no one we asked who was going around the house. He replied "The man who has been described to me." The next moment he said, "Oh there he is again?" And there true enough and as plain as daylight could make it we saw the same old man standing on the verandah, for some moments we were motionless and dumbfounded. I was the first to recover when I said, "Well old man you are still here then? If you are in any trouble or are earth bound and want to be freed from your bonds, you may follow us home and we will assist you?" That he understood me was evident, for he very politely bowed, and then vanished. As we returned home we wondered "what this could mean," and speculated on the result of our visit, however the matter was set at rest, for shortly after entering my friend's sitting room the large table began to tilt in an unaccountable manner, and seated on a chair next me was the same old man, this time I got a better view of his face, which appeared troubled and careworn,

presently a sister was entranced, and the chairman asked his name—"My name is M'Linch," "are you happy?" "no!" "have you committed any crime?" "no!" "did your body come to a violent death?" "no!" "then what is the cause of your being unhappy?" "because I have not gone to heaven." "Then why do you not go?" "Although I am free from the body, I am not freed from the earth, I am enduring purgatory, therefore I am not happy?" "Poor fellow would you like us to pray for you?" "no!" "why not?" "Because I have paid the priest to do so, and your prayer would do no good, you not being the priest—Father Maloney said, if I paid him well he would get me out, but he has not done so." "are you content to be so earth bound?" "yes, till the priest prays me out, then I shall be all right." A sister here remarked that the priest could not pray him out, he had been deceived, but if he would let us we would pray for him?" "Well, you may pray if you like but it will do no good"—here an eloquent prayer was offered for this poor misguided earth bound spirit, at the close of which he thanked us, and as he retired we could hear him repeat "no good—no good." We then closed the seance and separated. About six weeks later, one afternoon I called on my friend, he was standing with a paper in his hand, and not in anyway thinking of the foregoing, he handed me the paper, saying he had just come in, and had been entranced and hence the writing, but as it was in Japanese he could not read it. I was then entranced and wrote this interpretation—"Good evening, my friend F., I am glad to welcome you home, for your presence is needed very much "as that poor old Irishman is here asking for some one to help him out of the darkness he is in, he says he is now convinced the priest deceived him, and the man who showed him the error cannot be found, I told him to wait till you return and you would help him—signed Singola, Buddhist nun." When I came out of the trance, to my surprise the old man was sitting near me in utter despair, we again offered prayer to the Almighty Spirit for this poor earth-bound spirit. We knew that our prayer was heard for his bonds were broken, he "has gone up higher," for he never visits the old house now. Thus we have the twofold reward of releasing a spirit from bondage, and freeing a house from its ghostly visitor, but I shall never forget the agony of that night in the haunted house.

I enclose a copy of Singola's note, it has been (the original) submitted to an educated Japanese, who says it is a perfect reproduction of his language as written some 6500 years ago.

The Rev. Mr. Dowie has somewhat altered his ideas, in his last lecture against Spiritism, he said, "there was no disguising the fact that in Sydney it was gaining ground to an alarming extent, and it was useless to deny the fact that men do commune with spirits, but those spirits were all of the devil—devilish." After that there may be a little hope that soon he will allow that there are other spirits as well. For my part I am content to commune with devils if it is devilish to return to earth and thank us for our endeavours and success such as just related. If such is the result of prayer to the Almighty I shall be quite delighted to be visited with ten thousand such devils. One poor spirit returned after 27 years to thank one of our sitters for teaching him the A. B. C. when 26 years of age, he said it had not only helped him to improve his worldly condition, but had saved him from a life of sin and evil, and that through that means he was now happy, concluding with—"continue in well doing, faint not, but be faithful to yourself and the Almighty, and your reward shall be great." Our hearts were strengthened for we had felt faint and discouraged too often, and we thank God Almighty for visits from devils like these.

Mr. Proctor has caused a great strife amongst Christian parsons here, they begin to feel the ground shake beneath them, and they are at work, last week Mr. Proctor advertised his intention to lecture on Sunday evening in the Theatre Royal "on the Vastness of God's Universe." this was too much for the "good and holy keepers of the Lord's day," for they found that the most intelligent of their congregation longing for "pastures green," after so long feeding on the dry bones of

theology, were buying tickets for this greatest "treat of the season." They interviewed the Colonial Secretary, and succeeded in frightening him (although against his better judgment) into the belief that he would be "damned" if he allowed the lecture to take place, these good and holy soldiers of the cross are, I am safe in saying, not representative Christians, but still they succeeded, for when I arrived at the dress circle entrance at 6-30 the gas was just turned out and I was informed that "there would be no lecture to night Sir, for Henry Parkes will not allow it, this is a great change, for Parkes was one time the advocate of the "people's rights," but since he has succeeded to the Colonial Secretaryship, he in the cause of liberty continually shows the white feather. Although the lecture was not to be given till 7-30, by 7 o'clock there must have been at least some 4000 of the most intelligent and respectable people of Sydney present, although greatly disappointed the strictest order prevailed, but an undertone showed that there was more meaning of determination in the quiet than in the loud expression of resentment. I may say that in all my travels (which are not a few) I never saw a more orderly and well conducted law abiding gathering than blocked the street for nearly two hours, expressing themselves thus—"Oh, my Country, my Country, hast thou sank so low that thou canst not for one night worship God in thy own way? how hast thy glory of freedom departed?" And one burly native stood with rueful face saying—"What will they think of us in old England, we have shot their Prince, we have kicked their lord and now we have gagged their first scientific lecturer." But the disgrace will not fall on the people but on the devoted head of the Rev. Dr. McGibbon, (nothing can be done without a Rev.) for he claims the credit of frightening Parkes. But this is not the end of it, for they intend to bring their pop guns against our lecturers, C. Bright, and Tyerman, should the Colonial Secretary interfere with them it is our firm determination to resist any insult and stand shoulder to shoulder for our right of private judgment in matters of religion and science, to the bitter end. Next Sunday will be the test of right and truth, against the errors made by Henry Parkes and his friend the dogmatic enemy of liberty the Rev. D. McGibbon, this unwise step has caused a great excitement such has not been known for years. Mr. Bright, J. Tyerman and others have for years lectured on Sunday, and have not been interfered with, and now all at once the Secretary has awoke to the astounding fact that it is "wrong," next Sunday will decide if we are to have our rights as citizens of this free independent, and enlightened New South Wales capital. I will give a full report in my next.—yours truly,
Sydney, Sept. 24, 1880.

S. W. M.

SLATE-WRITING EXTRAORDINARY.

BY ERIC SARGENT.

I see that some of the religious papers rebuke Rev. Joseph Cook for testifying, with four of his friends, to the phenomenon of independent slate-writing as witnessed by them in my library on the 13th of March, 1880. Mr. Charles E. Watkins, the medium on that occasion, is now at No. 2 Lovering place, Boston, where he will remain a few weeks longer, and be ready, no doubt, to prove to any patient investigator that direct, independent writing, by some force exercising intelligence and acting apart from any visible organism, is a demonstrable fact. Mr. Cook, by his prompt and intrepid testimony, did no more than any honest man, whatever his prejudices, ought to do under similar circumstances, and urged by similar evidences and convictions. Certainly it is incumbent on those who are now abusing him to pause until they practically ascertain whether Mr. Watkins cannot do as much for them as he did for Cook and his friends.

On the afternoon of June 8, 1880, this same medium made me an unexpected visit bringing no "friend" with him, and repeated in my presence and that of two ladies of the family, not only all the phenomena got in the presence of Mr. Cook and his friends, but several much more surprising than any of those. The two ladies each

separately held out a pair of freshly cleaned slates simultaneously, the medium not touching them or the slates, but standing at least five feet off, on the opposite side of a large dining table. Intelligent writing, accompanied with proofs of clairvoyance, came in both cases. One of the pairs of slates used in this experiment had been bought by me at Mr. Clarke's shop, on Warren street, Roxbury, a few days before, and had laid in a private drawer, where no one had touched them. No chance for chemical writing here. Furthermore, I had thoroughly washed and wiped them just before the experiment began.

I had placed on the table a book-slate of my own, the covers being of stiff pasteboard. Both sides of the slate were already covered with writing, got on one side through Mr. Watkins in 1877, and on the other side through Mr. Powell in 1879. It was proposed by one of the ladies that writing should be given on this slate. I consented to have the old writing obliterated if it could be done without any known human agency. Instantly, before there could be any chance for a process of chemistry or a trick of legerdemain, the medium, closely watched, held out the closed slate, and in less than twelve seconds handed it back to me, and on opening it I found that one of the surfaces had been thoroughly cleaned, while on it had been written the words,—"Dear Brother—I rub this all out. Lizzie, your sister."

Let me pass over some half-dozen similar experiments (all made in broad daylight) and come to the closing one. Mr. Watkins, after putting a small bit of slate pencil between two slates, allowed us to handle and examine them, while he stood off at a distance of twenty-two feet in a diagonal line from a small work table in the opposite corner. We satisfied ourselves that the slates were clean. One of the ladies, by the mediums directions then placed them on the small table, resumed her seat, and, at a signal from him, brought them back to me, he keeping his distance all the while and never once coming within fifteen feet of the slates. Taking off the upper slate, I found on the under one these words, making eight lines on the slate, with a name well known to me signed in full: "My dear son and daughter, I am here, and I must see you again: can't say more. Your loving mother, M. O. S."

The extraordinary facts in this experiment were: That the slates were not touched by the medium after they had left my hands till they were brought back to me by one of the ladies and I had read the writing; that I had just previously satisfied myself that the surfaces were clean; and that while the direct writing was going on and could be heard, the medium stood at a distance of twenty-two feet from the slates.

Phenomena like these seem to me to knock out of materialism its *raison d'être*. Where and how can it find an explanation? It is impotent to suggest one consistent with its own dogmas. Here are proofs of an intelligent force acting outside of a human brain, outside of any visible organism. In all ages of the world such a force has been compared to the unseen human breath—*spiritus*. It has been called spiritual, as in contrast with what is visible, tangible or material.

I would advise those who doubt Mr. Cook's testimony, confirmed as it is by that of eminent German physicians in the case of Slade, and by many thousands of intelligent persons in this country, to try Mr. Watkins; or, if they cannot do that, to read a little work entitled "Psychography," by M. A. Oxon. The writer is a clergyman of the English Established Church, and a much esteemed professor in the University College of London.

There is another work not so easily got—"La Réalité des Esprits" (Paris, 1856), by the late Baron Guldenstubbé a Swedish nobleman, a great Hebrew scholar, and a devout truth-seeker, who gives in his book fac-similes of some fifty specimens of direct writing, given, as he believed, in answer to his own prayers for a proof of immortality. The phenomena was confirmed by some fifty respectable witnesses; but the Baron did not believe he was a medium. He was well known to Rev. William Mountford, now of Boston, who witnessed some remarkable phenomena in his presence. The celebrated German philosopher, I. H. Fichte, who died in 1793, was

converted to a full knowledge of the phenomena by Goldenstube, and his latest work (1879) was on the dangers and the uses of Spiritualism.

So long as our best thinkers refuse to grapple with this stupendous and most pregnant fact of direct writing, now so common and so easily demonstrated, in broad daylight, it is not surprising that the whole great subject of the various phenomena should fall into the hands of many persons unqualified by education and intellectual force to handle it and make the proper philosophical deductions. The illiterate and unscrupulous have often brought discredit upon the investigation; but it is about as irrational to defame and condemn the real science of Spiritualism, pure and simple (for a science it is), as it would be to speak ill of the equator or of the science of anthropology.

That the class of mediums, sensitive as many of them are to bad influences as well as good—often impecunious and needy—should sometimes be tempted to supplement genuine phenomena by spurious, is not surprising while human nature is what we know it to be, and when we learn that the genuine are not to be summoned at all times at the medium's pleasure, but are subject to certain subtle conditions of which he is often as ignorant as the rest of the world, I hope that those persons who really want the truth will take the present opportunity of investigating it. I also hope that the assailants of Mr. Cook will show their sincerity by investigating for themselves.—*The Boston Transcript*.

Boston, June 15, 1880.

OM.

[For the information and edification of those Australian colonists who are interested in the progress of religious thought, and the development of psychological science, I publish the following from the official circular letter and rules of the Theosophical Society.
—W. H. Terry, F.T.S.]

A BRIEF EXPLANATION AS TO THE NATURE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, AND ITS RELATIONS TO THE INDIAN PEOPLE AND VARIOUS RELIGIONS.

From the President and Council of the Theosophical Society to the friends of Truth, Greeting:

The following facts are given at the request of a Native prince who had misunderstood what this Society is and thought they should be made known.

I, The Theosophical Society was formed in America, five years ago, by some intelligent and energetic persons, with these four objects in view:—

First.—To discover and make known to the world the truth about the Aryas, by studying their ancient literature, religions, and sciences, and the various branches that have sprung from that parent stock.

Second.—To vindicate the said religion and philosophy by pointing out how they have been distorted through the ignorance of the Western scholars, and the malice of some other people; and, since it appears that each sect and branch has sprung from the Veda, therefore, all the Pandits of various sects have the opportunity and are invited to defend their religious view in this Society's journal, the THEOSOPHIST, and thus redress whatever wrongs may have been done to their views by either wilful or ignorant misrepresentations.

Third.—To gradually form the nucleus of a Brotherhood of Humanity, or Universal Brotherhood, of which each member joining might in time of need and according to his deserts, be helped by all and help in his turn, as a brother would another brother.*

*This does not imply that any member is entitled to demand pecuniary aid from his richer brother, or be forced to give help to a poorer. Even the borrowing of money from each other is strictly prohibited unless business should be transacted between the two entirely outside their connection with the Theosophical Society; in which case the Council has nothing to say, for it no more interferes with the individual freedom of its Fellows in social and commercial transactions than it does in their religious views. If, however, all the Fellows and the Council of the Society, after a due consideration of all the circumstances, find any of their number worthy of such a help, it should be given.

Fourth.—To discover the hidden principles in NATURE and MAN; to establish the boundaries of the powers of the inner Man on reasonable grounds; and, among other things, to ascertain how much truth there is in the so-called Yog Vidya, Jadoo, Mesmerism, Spiritualism, and other like things, and bring this truth, whatever it is, to light. The Society therefore neither affirms nor rejects anything without due investigation.

II. The Society asks both Eastern and Western scholars, learned Pandits, Sadhus and other good Asiatic Shastrees to help it to get this most valuable knowledge. Thus labouring together, those who are inspired by a love for India, may aid in bringing about the restoration of the now faded greatness of this once rich, powerful, and happy country, by the spread of useful knowledge.

III. The Society has nothing to do with politics, nor does it permit its members to engage in conspiracies and rebellions against any Government in any country where it has branches.

IV. The Society, as a Society, preaches no one religion, nor does it follow any one religious teacher, nor belong to any one sect. Its principle is that people following or not following the religion and customs of their ancestors are equally eligible for membership, provided they do not act in conflict with the principles of the Society. The Society, therefore, admits Hindus, whether idolators or not idolators, Parsis, Jains, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Mahomedans, etc., into its membership on terms of *mutual tolerance*; regards them all as brothers; and gives each as much honour as every other. The organizers and officers of the Society are not of one caste or religion, but of many. The General Council is composed of eminent persons residing in different countries of the world, and collectively representing all the principal great religions above enumerated.

V. The Society teaches people to be honest, peaceful, speakers of truth, pure in life, and to abstain from vice, including the vice of drunkenness, which has brought misery wherever it prevails. It teaches men to live not merely for this life, but to conduct themselves in such a way that they may be happy here and to attain perfect release from pain hereafter.

VI. Some of the Society's members believe in Yog Vidya (occult science) and think it ought to be universally known and practised by such as are prepared for this noble study.

VII. The Society has been much persecuted and lied about by the enemies of truth ever since it was founded, and especially in India. These enemies even went so far as to try to persuade the Government that it was a political Society in disguise. But, after watching every action of its members for months, the Government has officially announced that it is satisfied the Committee of the Society came here with no evil intention, and that its objects are laudable. His Excellency, the Viceroy, has also caused the Hon'ble Mr. Batten, his Personal Assistant, to write the following letter:—

Calcutta, 1st. January 1880.

DEAR MADAM,

I submitted to His Excellency, the Viceroy, the letter which you addressed to me and the numbers of the THEOSOPHIST which you were good enough to send.

His Excellency desires me to say that he is glad to find a Society of Western origin devoting itself with such zeal to the pursuit of Indian philosophy.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) G. H. M. BATTEN.

TO MME. BLAVATSKY.

VIII. The THEOSOPHIST mentioned by Mr. Batten is a monthly magazine published by the Society in the English language, with the object of circulating throughout the world such truths about the ancient religion as we and our brothers, the learned Sadhus, Pandits, and Swamis, may know. It is published at cost—so as to give it the widest possible circulation, among the poor as well as the rich.

IX. Persons who think well of our Society and wish to join it must observe the following rules:—(a) They

theology, were buying tickets for this greatest "treat of the season." They interviewed the Colonial Secretary, and succeeded in frightening him (although against his better judgment) into the belief that he would be "damned" if he allowed the lecture to take place, these good and holy soldiers of the cross are, I am safe in saying, not representative Christians, but still they succeeded, for when I arrived at the dress circle entrance at 6:30 the gas was just turned out and I was informed that "there would be no lecture to night Sir, for Henry Parkes will not allow it, this is a great change, for Parkes was one time the advocate of the "people's rights," but since he has succeeded to the Colonial Secretaryship, he in the cause of liberty continually shows the white feather. Although the lecture was not to be given till 7:30, by 7 o'clock there must have been at least some 4000 of the most intelligent and respectable people of Sydney present, although greatly disappointed the strictest order prevailed, but an undertone showed that there was more meaning of determination in the quiet than in the loud expression of resentment. I may say that in all my travels (which are not a few) I never saw a more orderly and well conducted law abiding gathering than blocked the street for nearly two hours, expressing themselves thus—"Oh, my Country, my Country, hast thou sunk so low that thou canst not for one night worship God in thy own way? how hast thy glory of freedom departed?" And one burly native stood with rueful face saying—"What will they think of us in old England, we have shot their Prince, we have kicked their lord and now we have gagged their first scientific lecturer." But the disgrace will not fall on the people but on the devoted head of the Rev. Dr. McGibbon, (nothing can be done without a Rev.) for he claims the credit of frightening Parkes. But this is not the end of it, for they intend to bring their pop guns against our lecturers, C. Bright, and Tyerman, should the Colonial Secretary interfere with them it is our firm determination to resist any insult and stand shoulder to shoulder for our right of private judgment in matters of religion and science, to the bitter end. Next Sunday will be the test of right and truth, against the errors made by Henry Parkes and his friend the dogmatic enemy of liberty the Rev. D. McGibbon, this unwise step has caused a great excitement such has not been known for years. Mr. Bright, J. Tyerman and others have for years lectured on Sunday, and have not been interfered with, and now all at once the Secretary has awoke to the astounding fact that it is "wrong," next Sunday will decide if we are to have our rights as citizens of this free independent, and enlightened New South Wales capuly. I will give a full report in my next.—yours truly,
Sydney, Sept. 8th, 1880.

S. W. M.

SLATE-WRITING EXTRAORDINARY.

BY EZES SARGENT.

I see that some of the religious papers rebuke Rev. Joseph Cook for testifying, with four of his friends, to the phenomenon of independent slate-writing as witnessed by them in my library on the 18th of March, 1880. Mr. Charles E. Watkins, the medium on that occasion, is now at No. 2 Lovering place, Boston, where he will remain a few weeks longer, and be ready, no doubt, to prove to any patient investigator that direct, independent writing, by some force exercising intelligence and acting apart from any visible organism, is a demonstrable fact. Mr. Cook, by his prompt and intrepid testimony, did no more than any honest man, whatever his prejudices, ought to do under similar circumstances, and urged by similar evidences and convictions. Certainly it is incumbent on those who are now abusing him to pause until they practically ascertain whether Mr. Watkins cannot do as much for them as he did for Cook and his friends.

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Yours truly,

(Sd.) G. H. M. BATTEN.

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IX. Persons who think well of our Society and wish to join it must observe the following rules:—(a) They

must be of good character and be recommended by two members of our Society; (b) They must promise to obey the rules (provided that they shall not conflict with the principles above set forth); (c) They must solemnly promise never to divulge certain signs and pass-words used by us to make ourselves known to each other, throughout the world, nor any other thing of a confidential nature which the Society is not willing to have known—such as its experiments and researches in Gupta Vidya (occult science)—which in all ages the learned have kept from the knowledge of the ignorant and the wicked. And each new member pays the small initiation-fee of Rs. 10 towards the fund for paying the legitimate expenses of the Society for its library, books, postage, rent, and other proper things that all Societies have to provide for. But no officer or member is allowed to draw any salary or percentage for his personal benefit.

X Ignorance of English is not a disqualification to entering the Society. Native ladies and gentlemen can become members even though they do not know English. As occasion requires, lectures in different vernacular languages will be delivered for the benefit of such as do not understand English.

XI If one or more persons of unexceptionable character, living at a distance from the Head-Quarters and being in sympathy with the Society, should apply for authority to form a branch, such authority would be given on conditions not inconsistent with the specifications in this circular, nor contrary to the rules, interests or dignity of the Parent Society. In case the formation of such a branch should appear expedient, it would be necessary for at least one of the applicants to come to the Head-Quarters for initiation and necessary instructions; or, if the number of applicants should be large enough to warrant their defraying the expenses, a duly qualified delegate would be sent from the Head-Quarters to that locality to formally inaugurate the new branch.

XII The Head-Quarters of the Society is now at Bombay, where it has a Library, Lecture Hall, and the Office of its journal. Wherever the President may be at any time, there is the Head-quarters. The Parent Society is in America, and there are branches in London and other parts of Europe. A branch, composed entirely of Buddhists, is forming in Ceylon, with the High Priest, Sumangala, the most learned of all Buddhists, as its Manager. There is also a Vedic Branch, called the Theosophical Society of the Arya Samaj, which follows Swamiji Dayanand Saraswati. A branch is also forming at Benares under the learned orthodox pandits, whom the President and his party met at that Holy City recently, and who elected the President an Honorary Member of their Mandir, and presented him with the following address:—

Brahmamrita Varshini Sabha, or Literary Society of the Benares Pandits.

We, the Pandits of Benares, certify that Colonel H. S. Olcott, the President of the Theosophical Society, has come to India with the view of trying his best to aid in reviving our science and philosophy. His acceptance of the Honourary Membership of our Literary Society, and not only the due consideration paid by him towards our own science and philosophy, but also his just and unaffected inclination towards the Vedic truths and principles, have encouraged us to present him a certificate stating the close tie of union, which he has formed with our Society. We think the journal, the THEOSOPHIST, has the true merit of presenting to our view the exact measures which should be taken for the revival and perfect development of our philosophy, for the good of our country.

We have been taken by surprise at the daring enterprise of a foreigner, solicitous to receive the outrageous darts of his fellow-countrymen in this grand and noble undertaking. As a matter of fact, men generally say that the grand impulse to such a befitting revival of the much neglected science and philosophy of the Aryans is the work of several master minds, and could not be produced by the meditated efforts of a single man. Being overpowered with this exaggerated opinion, men are in general not willing to risk their individual efforts

from the fear of these ending in smoke. In addition to all these, his unaffected tone towards our countrymen as brothers and friends, has produced such a deep and permanent effect on our minds that we cannot forbear mentioning it in these few lines.

(Sd.) RAMA MISRA SHASTREE:
The Manager.

Secretaries:

(Sd.) BALKRISHNA ACHARYA,	} Literary Society of The Benares Pandits.
(Sd.) M.A.	
(Sd.) RAM KRISHNA.	
(Sd.) SURYA NARAYAN.	

8th. February 1880.

XIII. All these great men, of many different views about religion, respect our Society, and most have joined it, because they approve its plan for the discovery and dissemination throughout the world of the truth about ancient religion and science, and the principle of Universal Brotherhood. They think that its members are working for the good of mankind and not for any bad or selfish motive. If you should also be favourably impressed with what has here been stated, the President will be glad to correspond with you.

By order of the Council,
HENRY S. OLCOTT,
President.

Girgaum, Bombay,
April, 1880.

**PULPIT MISREPRESENTATION AND A
CHALLENGE TO THE CLERGY.**

THE following letter bearing on the dishonesty of pulpit-teachers, recently appeared in two of the Bathurst papers.

SIR,—Recently a statement was made from one of the fashionable pulpits to the effect that Voltaire—a far more clever man than the surplined individual who used his name—spoke disparagingly of the person of Christ—a statement which I denounce as a *black calumny* and a *vile slander*; a statement devoid of all truth; a statement made by one who could never have read a line of Voltaire's magnificent works. Unhesitatingly I deny that Voltaire ever was guilty of the accusation, and challenge the whole of the clergy to prove it in any paper in the colony willing to publish both sides. It is becoming far too common for the clergy to resort to mean, cowardly tricks to support their rotten systems of sectarianism, and to harp from the pulpit (*cowards' castle*) where no one can reply to them. Why not come out as men, and give a reason for the faith that is in them? Why not teach their hearers a little more politeness? Why not make their congregations a little more honest? I again challenge the clergy to come out, and I will argue the point *re* Voltaire, etc., in any liberal paper.

Thanking you for your space, Mr. Editor,
I am, etc.,
F. E. S. HEWISON

Bathurst, Sept. 1st, 1880.

THE COLOURED WRAPPER.

We have to apologise to a number of our subscribers who received unduly a coloured wrapper round the last issue of this paper. Verbal instructions were given to our assistant who addressed the wrappers to send coloured wrappers to all whose subscriptions were in arrear of August. He misinterpreted the instructions, and sent them to all who had not paid in advance of that date. The subscription for the current volume, ending August, 1881, is due, but green wrappers are, on this occasion, sent only to those who owe for the whole (or portion) of last volume, and yellow wrappers to those who are still further in arrear. Subscriptions are payable in advance, and the shilling reduction to subscribers is based upon their being so paid. We have to pay our printer as we go on, and trust that our friends will forward subscriptions promptly to enable us to do so.

STATE AID TO MEDICINE.

BY C. W. ROHNER, M.D., CHILTERN.

"The scope of all my powers henceforth be this—
To bare my breast to every pang; to know
In my heart's core all human weal and woe."

Goethe's Faust.

THANKS to the exertions of the eternally progressive powers above, we have succeeded in shaking off the soul-oppressing incubus of ages—State-aid to Religion. An almighty God, made in the image of man, has at last learnt to carry on business without the aid of the almighty human dollar. Of course we have still a great deal of man-aid to religion in the shape of weekly circulating plates and collections; but the plates, alas, are getting gradually smaller, both in width and depth, apparently in the same ratio as the coins collected are decreasing in size, weight, and value. Now and then, also, small cheques are still sent in by back-country squatters, lucky miners, or successful attorneys on the point of death to build small houses of God for small minds withal; for the genuine admirers of a Christ-like religion prefer to worship their Father in quiet closets and corners of their own homes instead of in noisy organ-grinding, psalm-singing opera houses of temples, with their class-distinguishing pews, boxes, and stalls for the various degrees of moneyed respectability. There is, alas, still a pseudo-christian law in vigorous operation, according to which the free and enlightened citizens of the nineteenth century are compelled to rest from work—even that of pleasure and instruction—on the very day on which Jehovah is said to have commenced his most laborious work of world-building, some six thousand or so years ago. True, Mr. Proctor and other earnest missionaries of the gospel of nature and nature's God are still prohibited by law unlawfully to obey and carry out the first of all God's commandments—"Let there be light"—on Sundays. But all this intensely stupid and merely selfish opposition of an effete sacerdotalism is daily losing ground, and will, if left to itself, die from very light-hunger at no distant date.

Having done away with State-aid to religion, our next task is to withdraw State-aid from one-sided, dogmatic, would-be orthodox medicine. But this task will be found to be beset with far more difficulties in its execution than was the task of giving the *coup de grâce* to the pale spectre of theology which has been so long stalking about on the thin legs of its still thinner abstractions. It was, comparatively speaking, an easy feat to wean an overgrown anthropomorphic Divinity from the dry breasts of human nature, especially at a time like ours, when its bloated sectarian cube—the young divinities—were pulling the very life out of their fainting mother. But when the same weaning process is applied to the weak nerves of real flesh and blood humanity, as represented by an orthodox allopathy, the opposition to be encountered will be found to be in almost direct proportion to the distance which separates false humanity from real divinity. And this, indeed, we find already now to be the case with regard to the attempt of the people to withdraw themselves and their innocent children from the tyranny of orthodox leechcraft, which is at this moment fighting a desperate battle for its privileges, not only in England, but all over the world, under the protective ægis of State-aid, against the health of the present and the yet unborn generations of man. All over the world, so far as poisoning the life-stream of the pure human blood with the beastial filth and corruption of a lower order of animal creation is established and enforced by a blind law as an absolute and infallible measure of public sanitation, we see the hydra-headed monster of an unprogressive and stupidly conservative healing art—for the name of science it does not deserve—opposing, tooth and nail, the removal of the heavy pressure of the compulsory clauses of the Vaccination Act. This equally false and selfish medical science is not satisfied with the permission granted to it by ungrudgingly to continue the worship of its idol, Jenner, as long and as loud as it pleases. No; this free and unshackled adoration of a man-made

God of Health, the apotheosis of which cost the English nation the tidy sum of £30,000 and the annual sacrifice of the lives of 25,000 innocent babes, is not sufficient for a backward generation of sacerdotal Æsculapians; no, the whole world must, *volens volens*, prostrate itself before this hideous Moloch of disease and death. But what is still more incomprehensible and revolting is the fact that a lawfully poisoned world is not only not allowed to protect itself against this act of public poisoning by paying fines and suffering imprisonment for its disobedience, but is even compelled to put its own hands into its own pockets to pay for a thing which it does not want, nay, upon which it has long ago learnt to look with distrust as a highly dangerous and arbitrary interference with the divine laws of unadulterated nature and original purity. In two things principally man seems to require the superior light of his fellow-man for his guidance; in two things must man be prevented to follow the holy inspirations of his own pure mind and common sense, namely, in his choice of the road to heaven, and in that of his road to health. Priests, from time immemorial, have acquired the valuable privilege of pointing out to a benighted and spiritually sick humanity the road to the heaven of life eternal, whilst our medicine men claim the exclusive right of showing a corporeally sick humanity the road to their heaven of health. Men of spirit, men of mental penetration and independence of thought, have in all ages considered it as an unmistakable mark of a backward and artificially retarded civilisation whenever or whosoever they found protection to religion, or the State in league with the Church. But we have at last, by the aid of the spiritual lantern held in the liberally open hands of a few self-sacrificing thinkers of the Prometheus type discovered and realised for ourselves, and *en masse*, that an enlightened popular government, with progress and prosperity for its motto, has no more right to subsidise the Jehovah of the Jews, or to patronise the Jove of the Greeks, than it has to oblige the Pope of Rome, or the Bishop of Melbourne, in their wily efforts of putting ours and our children's eyes out. We will no longer permit our political guides and rulers to be exclusively Catholic, Calvinistic, Episcopalian, Wesleyan, Big-endian or Small-endian, but we insist upon their observing an attitude of strict neutrality and indifference towards all sects and creeds alike. Why, then, commit the crime of anachronism and continue to vouchsafe State-aid to sectarian medicine, to medicine allopathic in preference to medicine homœopathic, to orthopathic in preference to heteropathic, to hydropathic more than to alliotripathic, when we know and see it painfully illustrated every day, how much doctors always differ, and how hard it is for the best lay minds to decide when they do differ? This is eminently and notoriously the case with our present state of knowledge concerning the benefits derivable from vaccination. Eminent doctors all over the world differ at present as widely as heaven differs from hell in their respective opinions with regard to the utility and efficacy of this simple-looking, but in its effects so far-reaching operation of vaccination. And I ask, and anyone may ask the same question—how can, when the doctors differ, a government of laymen decide without running the risk of falling into the trap of a majority of medical men, who themselves may be under the influence of a temporary delusion, and blindly following a powerful leader of a presently regnant vicious tendency of therapeutics. How, with what right, and with what show of justice on its side, can a medical science claim the exclusive protection of the State for the carrying out of a scheme or method of preventing a disease the true nature and origin of which it does not yet understand? How can a body or school of medical men demand from the State to visit with fines and penalties the disobedience to, or the non-acceptance of, an advice which has so notoriously and in so many thousands of instances proved fatal to both health and life. With what show of consistency can a school of medicine call upon the legislators of a country to enforce a system of public vaccination when its best exponents admit, and are forced to admit, in the latest and best text-books on the subject, that they do not yet know the difference, or

JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

even if there is a difference, between smallpox and cowpox. How can such a medical science, whilst immersed in such profound ignorance about essentials, have the audacity to assert that there is a positive difference between ancient inoculation and modern vaccination? For it must be plain to the commonest understanding that, until the disputes of the doctors with respect to the difference of smallpox and cowpox are finally (?) and satisfactorily (?) settled, it is no less premature than illogical to assert that there is a difference between the inoculation of smallpox and that of cowpox, *id est*, vaccination. Well then, if inoculation is prohibited by one law, and its nearest blood-relation, vaccination, is enforced by another law, knowing all the while that the former cannot be distinguished from the latter, has, I ask, an intelligent and free citizen in the present lamentable state of medical learning on this subject, not a perfect right to insist that the nature and effects of a remedy or remedial operation should first be placed upon a sound and rational basis before the universal application of such a remedy or operation is made compulsory and hedged in with penalties and disabilities of a tyrannical nature? What gain or advantage, under these circumstances, is there in our relying for guidance in this perplexed business on a confused and confusing heap of partly misunderstood and partly misconstrued, if not often purposely cooked, sanitary statistics regarding the prophylactic powers of vaccination, when the very preliminaries surrounding this difficult question are still unsettled and undetermined?

Let us, therefore, urge and persist in urging, both in the capacity of free and intelligent citizens, and as sympathetic parents, anxious to protect the health of our dear children, upon a paternal government to liberate us from this horrible and unjustifiable persecution, and to withdraw its aid, without further loss of valuable time, from the propagation of a medical dogma which has the effrontery to assert that impurity is the mother of purity, and that an artificially, or rather artfully-implemented disease, is the best guarantee of future health. Let us, I say, earnestly and unanimously petition an enlightened and august Assembly of *patres conscripti* to at once remove the compulsory clauses of the Vaccination Act, and to grant us the privilege to which all free and intelligent men are justly entitled, to follow the dictates of our own individual reason and conscience in connection with a subject involving such grave consequences, both to the present and future health of the rising generation of Victorians, especially when it is perfectly well known to all who have studied the subject that the proposed cure is as bad as the disease, if indeed the very cure is not the very disease itself, against which we try to protect ourselves with all our might. Who would not, in conclusion, admire with me the profound wisdom of the words of Hippocrates?—

"The art is long, short the life, and swift, like moments, our opportunity of doing good."

Chilthorn, 16th September, 1880.

MR. TYERMAN.

WE are sorry to observe that Mr. Tyerman has been refused the use of the Sydney Temperance Hall for his Sunday lectures. From his correspondence with the Secretary, published in the last number of *Free Thought*, it appears that orthodox pressure has been brought to bear to attain this object, the reasons given by the trustees being the fear of "displeasing a large number of our customers."

Mr. Tyerman is, by this action, almost excluded from Sydney. No suitable hall or theatre being obtainable there, he has accepted an invitation to lecture at Grafton for a few weeks.

THE "Theosophist" for August is a fine number. The Occult Sciences, by H. S. Olcott; the Study of Theosophy, by N. D. K.; and a Land of Mystery, by Madame Blavatsky, are especially interesting. We are pleased to observe that the subscription list of this truly scientific journal has been largely augmented during the past few months.

CANON FABIAN'S success is always assured, alike in winning respect for his learning, inspiring admiration of his eloquence, and creating dismay among the bigots. His onslaught upon the popular doctrine of Eternal Torment, which he so powerfully assailed in those discourses, since published under the title of "Eternal Hope" and brilliantly vindicated in an article in the *Contemporary*, will not soon be forgotten. Recently, the learned Canon has been preaching about the Bible—its letter and its spirit; and among his utterances are to be found some of the most sensible and noteworthy that have ever fallen from his lips. Let us quote the following:—"It was 'the letter that killeth,' which led to the *decretum*, *horribile foteor*, *attamen verum*, of Calvin; to the superstition of the Mass; to the decision that all infants dying unbaptised were damned; to the representation of God in a manner to revolt the conscience of mankind; to theories of the Atonement, which were little less than blasphemy against the love of our Father in Heaven. There is hardly a heresy, or sect, or party; hardly an usurpation of kings or priests, hardly an error in sociology or science, which has not appealed to, or relied upon, the abuse of texts. Every burning for opinions which history records, every imprisonment, every persecution, every falsely attached stigma of infidelity, every slander of theological hatred, every endeavour to kindle in the supposed cause of religion the blind passions of the mob, every attempt to degrade Scripture into a wrangling-ground for sectarian differences, and to split it up into missiles to be used in fierce battle against our brethren in the Church of God, are but so many illustrations furnished to impress on us the neglected warning that the letter killeth; are so many lessons to show us the peril of following the mass of theologians—all the more unlearned from their asserted knowledge, and all the more ignorant from their assumed infallibility—who have wrested the Scriptures of God, not to their own injury only, but also to the perdition of mankind."

I would urge you for your own sakes, for the sake of the Church, for the sake of the world—you whose lives are before you, you who will have no small influence hereafter in helping or hindering the religion of the future—I entreat you to consider what ways of interpreting Scripture have been, and what ways have not been, fruitful and blessed for the happiness of mankind. If—alas! and shame to us that it should be so—the Scriptures have been cited, have been perverted, in defence of tyranny, of cunning, of assassination, of slavery, of persecution, of cruel repressions, of dangerous customs, of exterminating wars; if—alas! and shame to us—they have been quoted to slander the apostle, to crush the reformer, to discourage the student, to break the hearts of the saints of God, then the more you love, the more you reverence Scripture, the more you find in it for your souls the bread of life, the more I entreat you to beware how you thus distort its use and violate its majesty."

THE subject of Vaccination, which has been gyrating about the public mind for some time past, seems likely to receive some notice from our Parliament. It is much to be desired that there should be meted to this important matter the grave consideration it so urgently demands. At present it is in a very unsatisfactory state. Reliable data as to the prophylactic properties of vaccine virus are as difficult to obtain as the latitude and longitude of Utopia. Experts seem to be divided in their opinions; statistical returns are, not without reason, alleged to be inconclusive, and certificates—it is disagreeably hinted—are sometimes "cooked"! Mr. William Hitchman, M.D., M.R.C.S., L.L.D., D.O.L., F.R.S., whose academic and other appendages should show him to be at home equally in the departments of medicine, surgery, law, and science, writes to a London paper:—"Having been a public Vaccinator, medical officer of a poor-law union, and surgeon to a large parochial infirmary, during a great part of a long professional life, I protest, in the strongest manner possible, that animal products from another living body are allied

in their operation to *mineral poisons*, establishing a permanent morbid condition of the human blood when introduced subcutaneously, and thereby they favour the development of *several* forms of local or constitutional disease which, but for such compulsory inoculation, might remain latent for ever. Such are some of the results of Vaccination and Re-vaccination, even when the 'pure lymph' has been taken from impure horse, cow, man, or *ass* apparently healthy."

BOSTON must be a very desirable place to live in since the advent there of the Rev. Joseph Cook with his "Monday Lectures." According to Mr. Allen, who has contributed a remarkable article to the Sydney *Freethought* for August, the rev. gentleman above-named has instituted in that city "the Reign of the Kingdom of God and His Christ." I submit it to the members of our Young Men's Christian Association as a proposition worthy their most earnest attention, whether they had not better suspend their singing and other propaganda, and make strenuous efforts to get Mr. Joseph Cook over here. There is just one drawback: if, like the Bostonians, we all got turned to "righteousness," what would our clergy do?

MELBOURNE PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

The following ladies and gentlemen were elected without opposition to fill the various offices in the Lyceum during the six months ending February 28th, 1881:—

CONDUCTOR—Mr. C. Johnson.

VICE CONDUCTORS } Miss Brotherton;
 } Mr. J. G. Hoogklimmer.

GUARDIANS—Messrs. Moore, Carson and Vevers.

TREASURER—Mr. Moore. SECRETARY—Mr. Cherry.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR—Mr. L. Weichard.

WATCHMAN—Mr. Cooke.

LIBRARIAN—Miss Sutherland.

LEADERS:

Messrs. Terry	Messrs. Cherry
" E. Joske	" Vevers
" Hoogklimmer	" Codlin
" P. Joske	
Mesdames Serle and Moore	Misses Hyslop,
	Neimann, Donnelly.

The sessions during last month, with exception of Flood-Sunday, have been well attended and interesting.

"DOWIE!"

A DISGUSTING tract, published in Sydney in connection with the Rev. (save the mark) John Alexander Dowie's recent Anti-Spiritualistic, and we might add, Anti-Spiritual lectures, has, within the last few weeks, been introduced into Melbourne, apparently by the agents of the Colonial Publishing Society, whose advertisement and imprint it bears. It is entitled "Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils," and is garnished with such terms in reference to Spiritualism as "Anti-Christian Imposture," "Unclean Superstition," "Accursed Teachings," "Infamous Spiritist," concluding one of its choice paragraphs by pronouncing the doom of Spiritualism as follows:—"And die it shall, like a poisonous viper, which men trample to death."

And this is nineteenth century Christianity! as preached by one who assumes to be a disciple of the loving Nazarine Reformer. It is well for the writer of these lines, and many hundreds of his friends in this and the neighbouring colonies, that the temporal power is not in the hands of the Church, or under the dispensation of Pope Dowie; they would soon grace an *auto da fe* in the hope of killing their religious opinions with their physical bodies. The major portion of the pamphlet is made up of disingenuous applications of isolated extracts from Spiritualistic authors, of which any honest layman would be ashamed. Indeed we doubt if there are half-a-dozen Melbourne clergymen who would endorse the scurrilous and eminently unchristian, or more properly speaking, unchrist-like effusion of this (mis-called) reverend villifier of men who have more practical religion in their fingers' ends than he appears to have in his whole body. If heaven is to be made up of such men we have no desire to enter there.

JOTTINGS FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

A LECTURE entitled "The world we live in, and the World to come, considered in a Progressive and Spiritual aspect," was delivered in the Athenæum, Yackandandah, on the evening of September 18th, by Mr. W. C. Smith; Mr. Hobbs, our local miller, filling the chair. With a few opening remarks he introduced Mr. Smith to the audience, who numbered amongst them the *creme de la creme* of Sleepy Hollow. Mr. Smith was for a long time a member of the Barnawatha circle, of which such startling accounts appeared from time to time in the *Harbinger* of the phenomena obtained chiefly through the mediumship of Mr. Robert Brown, upholding the faith and knowledge of the believers, and testing the credulity of the sceptics; to the one as being a confirmation of the evidence already gained, and to the other as being proof positive of unmitigated humbug. And yet, in face of the last hypothesis, the lecturer, a member of that circle, and a gentleman to all appearance as sane and as intellectual as those he stood before and addressed, told how "many a time and oft," had he *shook hands with spirits*; and their hands felt as warm and as natural as any hands of spirits in the flesh." Incredible it may seem to you, but nevertheless it is a fact, and there are some in this room, he added, can substantiate what I say, for they have often undergone the same experience." Take the lecture all in all it showed that a deal of research had been expended on it. Never to some were the arguments previously presented, although familiar to the well-read Spiritualist. It commenced by giving the ideas of humanity in the earliest ages of historical records as to the future life: then of the advent of Jesus—the religion he taught, which is not the Christianity of the Churches of the present day. The grand commandment, "*Love one another*," embraces all that was good, noble, or pure, and worthy the Originator who was good, noble, and pure in the highest sense to which such terms can be applied.

The lecturer asked, "Are the teachings of Christ obeyed in that respect? No. Imprisonment, persecution, murder, and innumerable other horrors were used to give Christianity the hold that it now has. The dungeon and the stake showed plainly the command "Love one another" had no authority with the magnates of the Church; Christ's teachings have for centuries become a dead letter, and Christianity reigns instead. (Christ started the religion he taught, as being pure and simple, and pure and simple is the truth. The spirit-world are pouring down, that which will, in a not very distant date, restore the religion which Christ taught, which embraced all in all. Worship God, and love one another. Man progresses; moving ever onward; nothing recedes. From the cradle to the grave man gains knowledge, and when he dies, or more properly speaking, when he "changes," for in the strict sense of the word there is no death; he goes into the spirit-world the same man, the same peculiarities; everything that stamps him as being distinct entirely from the rest of humanity he takes with him, and through certain means he can communicate and tell you so.

The lecturer said there was something more rational in the Spiritualistic knowledge of the after life than in the one as taught by the Churches, viz., the everlasting playing on harps before the great white throne, &c.

The above is a very meagre outline of the lecture, but sufficient is given to show your readers the way in which the subject was treated. It is to be hoped the next time Mr. Smith lectures, the room in which he does so will be of better acoustic qualities than the one in Yackandandah, for without having to strain the ear to the utmost, it was impossible to follow the speaker, and consequently the pleasure of hearing a good thing was marred by the defect alluded to.

Votes of thanks were accorded to the lecturer and chairman, after which the meeting separated.

THERE is held in the local School, every 7th day, a Sunday's chat, presided over by a worthy "curer of skins," who to do better things aspires to become a "curer of souls." Thinking he was high enough in the profession to become an expounder of difficult portions of the Old and

New Testaments, he gave out to the children assembled that he would answer any questions put to him in writing. Accordingly a friend of mine gave him a few that, to do him justice, he tried very hard to solve. The list was that enumerated by Colonel Ingersoll, entitled "Questions for the Orthodox," commencing with the lines—"Who was it tempted the devil to sin?"

I shall not write the whole of the piece, but merely number the line and give the answer by our modern Biblical exponent.

1st to 4th line: "I dont know."

4th to 7th line: "Thank God, the power of Satan is limited, and will be destroyed. He cannot injure anyone who is willing to receive the truth as a little child. Those who will not bend their proud spirit, but wish to dictate terms to their Maker, tempt the devil."

8th line: "Those who have been redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus are one with Christ and can never fall. They stand higher than the angels and nearer to their God."

9th to 12th line: "Moses does not tell us there were no mornings and evenings before the sun was created. Our earth is quite a juvenile planet compared with the rest of the great Creator's work."

13th to 18th: "Who art thou, O man, that repliest to thy Maker? God did not curse Adam or his descendants. He removed the curse that sin had entailed by giving His only-begotten Son to die for us. Was Abel cursed? Why can't we all be like Abel? Who dares to say it is God's fault we are not?"

19th to 21st: "Then we should never have known what redemption meant. The redemption of one soul is a greater effort of Divine power than the creation of the universe; it makes simple man foremost of the sons of God, and nearer the eternal throne." (Is that blasphemy or Christianity?)

22nd to 35th: "This is irreverent and impious. Angels veil their faces before the holy God. Should mortal man contend with God?"

25th to 29th: "I am not sure Cain went through the marriage ceremony, or what persons did it. No doubt he had plenty of sisters and nieces to choose from. It is an emergency that is not likely to occur again."

30th to 33rd: "Water is not an element. (This is something new at any rate.) It is composed of two of the gases that compose our atmosphere. The quantity is, therefore, illimitable. Moses tells us and geologists tell us that the whole earth was covered with water before man was created."

34th to 37th: "I have seen a calculation somewhere by somebody that seemed to make the matter clear. I have not time to split hairs about it."

38th to 39th: "I believe it was God our Saviour, and that He frequently visited the earth in human form. Do not fight against the God who died for you."

42nd to 46th: "Men are bolder now; they defy when God questions their acts, and defy his attributes."

The rest of the answers are a conglomeration of phrases unintelligible to anyone but a lunatic. Enough has been shown to give an idea of the teachings of one of the heads of an orthodox Sunday school. The sooner a change is made in such a state of things the better for the social as well as the spiritual welfare of all.

A NEIGHBOUR of mine, the wife of a miner, told me a very remarkable experience occurred to her a few days ago. She has with other children two of the age of four and two years respectively. The house the family live in is not many yards from a creek, to which she strictly forbids the children to go. On the day alluded to she saw the eldest child walking up and down by the side of the creek with an old rag doll in her arms—saw her as plainly and as distinctly as ever she saw her. Alarmed that some harm would befall the child, she called to her, "stay still Mary, don't move," and keeping her eyes on her she ran with the greatest haste down towards the creek. When about half way the figure faded out of sight; and, at the same time she heard the child call out "Mother!" from near the spot she had started to run down to the creek. This is the second time she has undergone the same experience,

having once before seen the double of her husband in a spot when he was no where near the place. The vision of the child occurred in the middle of the afternoon.

ADVICE TO INVESTIGATORS.

Lismore, Richmond River, N. S. W.
August, 10th, 1880.

MR. W. H. TERRY,

Sir,—Having heard and read a good deal about Spiritualism, I was induced (partly by curiosity and partly by an unfettered desire to know the truth,) to join a few friends in forming a circle, so that we might investigate the matter, and see and judge for ourselves. We met on the first Saturday in February, and met on every Saturday night at eight o'clock p.m.

Two of our circle, myself and another—a dark-eyed man of strong will, (and perhaps the will has something to do with it,) took part in a circle—or seance, on two occasions previous to the Saturday named above. Then, and ever since, at our sittings, the table has been solely under his control. At each sitting we have the usual result of sittings, as described in other localities—viz. Answers to questions, by raps, sometimes correct, and often nonsensical, sometimes astonishing and occasionally disgusting. Still we are determined to keep on, but need your direction and advice to lead to better results.

Will you please to grant it? If so, for my own part, I shall be ever grateful. I may state that we commenced the circle with four gentlemen, and two ladies; one gentleman and one lady have retired. The other four are determined to proceed, and have requested me to write you for information. You can feel by the tenor of this letter, that it is our desire to advance in the science of Spiritualism. The table used, is a common pine table, unvarnished, measuring 3 foot 6 inches long, by 2 feet wide. As I have stated before, one of our number has absolute control of the table, and is to my mind, a promising subject for a medium. The table seems to obey his will. He states himself that he can lift the table when he pleases, by drawing in a long breath, and thinks it is the muscles of the arm, by pressure, on the table, and contraction, or drawing in process, influenced by drawing in a long breath. Is it so? For my own say, I think not. On one occasion we asked,—"Have spirits great power?" "Yes!" "Will you oblige us with an exhibition of your power?" "Yes!" Presently the table moved in a quadrant, with a dragging motion towards the party described, actually pushing the chairs before it, the two legs moving coming in contact with the carpet, tore it off the floor, as it proceeded on its orbit—that expresses it, I think. The wall brought its up however. When placed clear of the wall, it leaned over until the lower edge of the table, was within one foot of the floor; myself and another of the circle, pulling on the opposite and elevated side of the table to force it back; but without success. I pulled to that degree that my feet went clean from under me, still hanging on to regain my feet I had scarcely got footing, when down it went on its side, and moved in that position inside the door of the next room, our hands on the table the while, that is, as well as we could keep them there. Now we have got so far, and can get no further. Hence the necessity of applying to you for advice. Please answer the following questions.—"Can you recommend the purchase of some book of directions to assist us? Is heavy smoking in one wishing to become a medium a hindrance to his advancement as a medium? Is it right to talk on matters foreign to the subject on hand? What condition should the room be in, in which seances are held? Is it right to ask questions before a medium is developed? Does it matter how many there are in a circle? Is it prudent to admit strangers? If any of the four remaining withdraw, will the introduction of another retard our advancement? I should now end this letter, having done my duty to those who requested me to write; but I have a duty to perform to myself, that is, I must sift this matter. Born I may say a Roman Catholic, educated in a Roman Catholic College, my young life was fenced in by dogmas. Twenty years of free and unfettered intercourse with men of every shade of opinion, has so remodeled the man, that he can

think and do as he pleases. I am very fond of reading, and have read books, and treatises out of number, both for and against Christianity, until my mind is a *chaos*. Now you see, in my present position, I would be glad to get even a glimpse of the rays of light, which mediums, and Spiritualists tell us—light up the darkness, that surround the *difficulties and intricacies* of modern Christianity. Now, dear sir, we want a ray of *your* light. You are in the field of freethought. If by the side of your beaten track, to your garden of enlightenment, you see a *poor flower* that has been *neglected* and trodden under foot; if a few moments of *care and culture* will restore it to the golden beams of intellectual light, which will cause its old and decayed stem to start a vigorous shoot, which in time will be clothed in beauty; surely it is worth the trouble. Now, here we are, just in the same position as the flower, we need *help* to lift our heads above the *rudeness* which surround us, we need *culture*, so that we can start again, into new life and light. Will you please to assist us? "He was not the light, but the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." Dear Sir, if granted, we may not at first comprehend it; but will try *patience and perseverance* to study its lustre. And by the simple addition of four to the number, endeavour to make it shine the brighter.

Yours obediently,
V. J. NORRIS,

[We are often recipients of letters like the above, more or less urgent, which our multifarious occupations prevent our answering seriatim. We reply to this one publicly, in hopes that the information furnished may be useful to others, besides the writer and his circle.]

The discovery made by the second member of the circle, is not new, but has been made by many before him, both Spiritualists and sceptics. *Will*, it is that which controls the motion of a table, or any other ponderable object, charged with animal magnetism. Will, is a property of spirit, whether embodied or disembodied, and that spirit who possesses the most positive will, can control and direct the odic force. It is, however, unwise for an investigator to exercise will in this direction, as it prevents spirits of a less positive character, and even those of an equally positive mind from communicating, as the latter would not, unless there was some particular object in view, enter into a contest for supremacy.

Our correspondent asks first,—"Can we recommend a book of directions?" "Yes, certainly, there are many handbooks for enquirers, Tyerman's 'Guide to Spiritualism.' Mrs. Britten's 'On the road.' Powells, 'Mediumship—its laws and conditions.' 'What's o'clock,' 'Fpirituelle, or directions in development,' Davis's 'Philosophy of Spiritual intercourse.' And many others which will serve as a guide to investigators, and clear away many difficulties from their path.

Second.—"Is heavy smoking detrimental to the development of mediumship?" "As a rule it is, especially for the higher phases. We have met with many spirits, to whom the influence of tobacco was very repulsive, but physiologically it lessens the nervous vitality, and decreases the flow of the odic emanation.

Third.—"It is unwise to enter into animated conversation whilst sitting for investigation, the minds of those present should be directed to the matter before them, and in as calm quiescent state as possible. The room should be of a comfortable temperature, well ventilated and quiet.

Fourth. Questions may be asked as soon as a means of communication is open, but test questions should be avoided until fluent control is obtained by the communicating intelligence.

Fifth.—It is immaterial how many there are in a circle, provided they are in harmony, but there is a greater probability of unity in a small circle than in a large one.

Sixth.—It is imprudent to admit strangers until the controlling spirit advises that they have sufficient power to overcome the disturbing influence of such.

Seventh.—If a member withdraw, the introduction of another in his place will, as a rule, retard the progress of the circle. Nevertheless it is often wise and sometimes absolutely necessary to fill the vacancy to keep up the power of the circle.

Our correspondent speaks of Spiritualism as a science, it is not

yet reduced to that; but in its phenomenal aspect is rapidly tending that way. If he desires to investigate it scientifically he must avail himself of the experience of those who have preceded him, and who have recorded in print, what they have discovered of the laws governing spiritual intercourse. There are hundreds of substantial volumes, published in both England and America, and descriptive catalogues are readily obtainable. Before experimenting in any other subject it is customary to read and study, but in this all important one, this preliminary is often overlooked; and difficulties, disappointment and failure follow as a natural consequence to the ignorance of the investigator. The small circle in question seems to be earnest truthseekers, and with the information given them we have no doubt they will ultimately find what they seek.—ED. H. L.]

OBITUARY.

DIED at the residence of Dr. J. M. and Mrs. M. M. Peebles, in Hammononton, on Wednesday, the 16th inst., Mrs. Sylvia Conkey, in her 88th year. The deceased, born in Shoreham, Vt., was one of those sturdy, noble New England women, that wrought well and wrought much in her day and generation. During a long and useful life she manifested not only the christian graces of the true woman, but was noted for industry, energy of character, kindness of heart and sound practical intelligence.

As wife, mother, sister, friend, she faithfully fulfilled the social and moral duties of life, and at a ripened old age, without a doubt or fear of the future, passed the "peaceful river" to the summer shores of the heavenly world.

She bore her last sickness with great patience and fortitude; and yet, often expressed a desire to depart and beat rest in the better land of immortality. The death scene was remarkably calm and serene. The change was quick with no painful struggle. She even closed her own eyes.

"Sweet is the scene when virtue dies;
When sinks a righteous soul to rest.
How mildly beamed her closing eyes.
How gently heaved her dying breast."

The Rev Mr. Gordon, for several years a member of Dr. Peebles' family, officiated at the funeral, the services of which were held just at evening time. Dr. Peebles made a few appropriate remarks. The Universalist Choir furnished the singing, Miss Carrie Bowles presiding at the instrument. The mortal remains were transferred to Canton, St. Lawrence county N. Y.

G. MILNER STEPHEN'S MARVELLOUS CURES.

A gentleman of our acquaintance was so favourably impressed with the pamphlet on the above subject referred to in our last, that he has made arrangements for a copy of it to be sent to every clergyman and every Mechanics' Institute and Reading Room in Victoria, that they be made aware of the fact that the (so-called) miraculous cures of the past are being paralleled in the present.

MR. A. M. SAMUELL, whose advertisement appears in another column, has been intimately connected with the Spiritualistic and Freethought movements in this city for many years past, and was a member of committee of the 1st Victorian Association. His recent lectures on the significance of Ancient Symbols were much appreciated by those who heard them. We have known Mr. S. as a man of business for the last fifteen years, and from our knowledge of him in this capacity, feel satisfied in recommending him to any of our country friends who may require a business agent in Melbourne.

A PROSPECTUS has been issued of a New Freethought Journal for the discussion of Theological questions, &c. It is expected the first issue will be ready about the middle of the present month. The title chosen for it is the "Reformer," and the publishing office is at 33 Wellington Street, Collingwood.

COMMUNICATION RECEIVED AT A CIRCLE IN CASTLEMAINE.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—For a beginning I will present to you the Cardiff Circle's greetings this evening. They are so much pleased with your letter, as they are not in the habit of receiving such; most that come to them they would rather be without, because they are doubting and full of curiosity to see their wonderful manifestations, desirous that such manifestations should come to them, and then they would believe them, for they cannot believe them unless they were themselves present; which in many instances they cannot be, because that would do more harm than good, as the conditions must, for a time at least, be observed. By and bye, when the medium is more fully developed, he will be able to come before a large and public audience, and give a seance that will astonish the world. Friends will then be seen and recognised by friends, and then they will believe that the heavens are opened, and that the spirits of the good and true can come back to earth and communicate with the loved ones they have left. This will be a change which will convince multitudes; "So that all shall believe, from the least to the greatest;" from the beggar to the crowned head; and thus will the prophecy be fulfilled—That the angels will descend and ascend upon the children of men; thus will Scripture be fulfilled and made plain to the eyes of men; that the world may believe and improve in knowledge and wisdom, and see that "The Lord our God is good," and that "His mercy endureth for ever." Oh! that people who repeat these words would really believe what they repeat, and live accordingly; it would be a great help to the spirit world to find that people were in earnest, and had real, true faith in the beneficence, benevolence, mercy, and holiness of their God. He who fully realises this is on the true road to spiritual development of the highest kind, seeing real beauty in God and in his works; for it is there only you can see God's beauty and wisdom, and His power, and strength, and holiness. It is in nature alone that all His attributes are to be noted and remarked. Nowhere else can they be observed and commented on, for God is invisible otherwise. Oh! that men would see these things in their right light, and observe the working of nature more closely; they would discern many wonderful phenomena in so doing. This is the reason they do not progress in knowledge, because they will not look closely enough into nature and her teachings; which is a great mistake; knowledge is not to be found in any other direction than in investigating nature and her laws and language, for she has a language of her own which the uninitiated ear cannot hear, but which to the developed soul is a voice speaking clear and plain, so he who runs may read.

Whisper in the ear of science that she is still blind to many facts around her, and she will turn from you indignantly, with a proud smile at your credulity in believing anything of the sort. She thinks she knows all, and you cannot inform her of anything. But alas! she is wilfully blind, because she has it in her power to examine, and will not, simply because her pride will not allow her to bumble herself so far as to follow in the wake where others are leading her. No, No, No! She (Science) must lead, and all others must be humble followers of the same persons, same things, and same pursuits. Not an iota will they yield till they are driven from the field of research by others who will humbly search for truth as for the richest store they can gain. Search, therefore; dig deep into these things, my friends, and you will become the leaders instead of the followers of men; dig deep down into the mysteries of spirit-life, and bring up to the light, knowledge which will enrich the poorest peasant and make the monarch willing to give up his crown for such inestimable wisdom, and knowledge, and research!—Things old brought to light and placed in a new light, and things new produced from the unseen realms of infinite Wisdom and Love, and brought close to your doors. Oh! think what a treasure-house you may have if you seek for it earnestly; think what a precious store of information and spiritual food will be yours if you desire it. We

come to give you wisdom that is not to be weighed in the balance with the wisdom of earth; it cannot be fully estimated by any one of those on your earth's sphere, because earth-sphere wisdom belongs to the earth, and this wisdom is not of the earth at all, but pertains to the spheres beyond the confines of our earth.

This is what I want to give you, my dear friend—the wisdom of the heavenly spheres, which shall be to you a great power on earth to make men better, and wiser, and truer, and happier than they are at present. This is the wisdom which is spoken of in Rev., chap. xiv., and 12th ver.—"Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

At a future time I will give you more, for it becomes much more easy for me to control now, and I expect it to become more easy still, so that I will be able to write through you as if I were my own amanuensis, which I certainly am, for you are writing my impressions, and therefore I will soon be able to make you of use to me and others; for what you write I hope will be a benefit to others in the future of this age of reason and reflection, which man is coming to; and you, my dear friend, will keep it on by your knowledge of spirit power and wisdom; for without wisdom the spiritual gift is like a precious jewel in a swine's snout, which is quite out of place and degraded by its position, and by its surroundings, and its unclean companions, and altogether unsuitable to what ought to be its position, and the ornamental part it has to play in society.

I have not given you what I intended, because I found it was better to go on with what I could impress to you easily, and leave the more important messages until I have more complete mastery of you; therefore for the present I shall say adieu!

A. G.

July 13th, 1879.

MONCK FUND.—We have remitted £4 10s. to Dr. Monck in addition to £10 previously sent. A statement will appear in our next.

Advertisements.

Will be Shortly Published,

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By the above calamity the English Periodicals for part of June and July have been lost; also, Psychic Facts, Higher Aspects of Spiritualism, and other new works. Subscribers and customers will be supplied as soon as duplicates can be obtained.—W. H. TERRY.

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The Medium, London (Weekly), 12/6, per annum.
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 Spiritual Notes (Monthly), 4s.
 The Banner of Light, the oldest American Spiritualistic and
 Freethought paper, published weekly. Subscription, 22/6 per ann.
 The Religio-Philosophical Journal, a first-class American Weekly
 published at Chicago, U.S.A. Subscription, 22/6 per annum.
 Shaker Manifesto, monthly, 6d., 5s. per annum.
 Spiritual Record, Chicago, (Weekly), 12s.
 The Voice of Angels, an interesting journal Edited by Spirits,
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 the Known to the Unknown—Matter and Force,
 &c., 18/. Vol. 3, Mind as a Function of the Organism
 —The Sphere of Sense and Logic of Feeling—The
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